



The Ohio SALute

www.ohiolegion.com

An Official Publication of Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Ohio

March 2016 - Volume 20, Issue 1

A Message from the Detachment Commander



Greetings to All Sons Members!

As I write this article, we have 60+ degrees outside in February, an amazing winter with very little snow for our area of the state.

A lot of things have been happening since our last edition of *The Ohio SALute*. I have made a few District visits and have been snowed out of two as well. On my travel to the Eighth District for their meeting, my rate of travel (in a heavy snowstorm) was going to make me over 3 hours late. I called the Eighth District Commander and had to cancel out. They went all out that day for my arrival and I couldn't make it. That was January 10 and their mayor, Steve Patterson, had made that day in Athens "Dave Brown Day." Later, their District Commander Matt Hoisington, mailed me the Proclamation from the City of Athens Mayor. That was very nice.

On January 24, another snowstorm struck the southern part of Ohio. The 7th District meeting in Portsmouth that day was held as scheduled, but I had to drive through heavy snow north of there to get to Portsmouth (the Eleventh District meeting, also on that day, was postponed due to the heavy snow and we would have had to drive through that area). Sorry guys, we couldn't make that one either.

As I think back on my years of traveling throughout our Great State, I remember one year in particular of trying to get to a First District Meeting. It was snowed out, rescheduled, snowed out again, rescheduled again, and snowed out again. On the third attempt at rescheduling, we finally got to have the meeting. Sometimes the winter weather in Ohio plays havoc with our schedules.

On Sunday, February 21, I traveled to Monroeville to attend the Fifth District's Oratorical competition. Tony Moore (Squadron 547 member and SAL 5th District Oratorical chairman) did a fantastic job running this competition for the first time. I have worked at some of the State finals in Columbus over the past few years and this year will mark the first time that the Fifth District has had a representative.

Coming up on the horizon, I have visits scheduled to the Fifth District on April 9 to install their new Officers and on April 10 in the Third District.

The Detachment Convention is in Chillicothe May 20-22. Year-end awards will be handed out on Saturday at the morning meeting. In the afternoon, the Seventh District is offering a bus trip to three Posts culminating with a dinner at Post 62.

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SALute The Ohio

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COMMANDER CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

They are also offering a tour and meeting with the veterans at the Chillicothe VA facility.

Soon you will see information in Bill Town's weekly email about our Convention booklet. If you are not on Bill's email list and want to be, send him an email with your contact info to docbill@neo.rr.com. Ad space will be available for purchase for businesses and individuals. Please purchase ad space, as profits from the sales will go to SAL charities.

I hope to see all of you at Convention as we elect our 2016-2017 Officers.

For God and Country,

Dave Brown, Commander

Detachment of Ohio

(419) 651-4681

dbrown@truaxprinting.com

First Vice-Commander



Where has the time gone? It just seems like we started this membership year, but we are already looking for that first District to reach 100%. Our membership is going strong in the Detachment. We have several Districts that are well over the 85% mark, and some that are very close to reaching their 100% quota goal. I would like to congratulate the Second District and the Sixth District for winning the Blue Jug Award this year! Great job to those two districts!

On the National level, we have made all the lap goals set. We are currently 18th in the Nation at 82.14% and third in the Central Region. The Central Region is currently in first place among the other regions.

Let's keep up the hard work and hopefully with some more turn-ins we can be up in the 90% by Detachment Convention.

Speaking of Convention, I look forward to becoming your next Detachment Commander. At the Mid-Winter Conference, I had my Detachment shirt order form out. I am still accepting orders for my shirt until the end of April. Please check out the Detachment website for the order form or the order form in this edition of *The Ohio SALute*. If you want your shirt at the Detachment Convention, please have your order in by end of April. Make all checks payable to Dan Finnell and mail to 2758 Independence Way, Grove City, Ohio, 43123. I will take another shirt order at convention in May.

I look forward to seeing everyone in May!!!

Dan Finnell, Second Vice-Commander

Detachment of Ohio

sp964@wowway.com



COMMANDER'S SHIRT 2016-2017!!

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE _____

S _____ X \$25.00 M _____ X \$25.00 L _____ X \$25.00

XL _____ X \$25.00 XXL _____ X \$30.00 3X _____ X \$30.00

4X TO 5X _____ X 30.00

MAKE ALL CHECKS PAYABLE TO: DAN FINNELL

2758 Independence Way
Grove City Oh 43123

ALL ORDERS MUST BE IN BY APRIL 30TH TO RECEIVE SHIRT AT STATE CONVENTION!!!
(ANOTHER ORDER WILL BE TAKEN AT CONVENTION)



Second Vice-Commander

Happy New Year!



I just wanted to touch base and let everyone know it has been a busy beginning of 2016! I have managed to keep busy by visiting several Squadrons as well as attending the Detachment Mid-Winter Conference.

Ticket sales for my raffle have been slow. I would appreciate any push or help you may be able to provide with this fundraiser. Please keep in mind, 50% will go back to charities and the rest will be used to purchase tickets for sporting events around the state. The more we sell, the bigger the prize and the bigger the amount that will be contributed to the charities.

Please feel free to call me with any questions!

For God & Country,

Evan Mahlman, Second Vice-Commander
Detachment of Ohio
(419) 966-1212
mbsb2014@bright.net

SAL Detachment of Ohio
Sports Tickets
Give A Way

Drawing at SAL State Convention
May 20-21-22 2016

1-\$5⁰⁰ or 5-\$20⁰⁰
Legion

"2" Tickets From Each Team Maybe "4"

Send Tickets To
Evan Mahlman
10-260 Rd M Napoleon OH 43545
419-966-1212
Second Vice Commander

Check payable to Evan Mahlman

"AND MORE"

Chaplain's Corner

Fellow Sons!



It's been a busy winter! In December, my wife and I played Mr. & Mrs. Santa Claus at our Home Post 703. I hope Santa fulfilled all of your wants and dreams. Then it was on to the New Year.

SEE CHAPLAIN PAGE 4

CHAPLAIN CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

On January 10, I was at Carl Geiger Post 405 in the Fifth District where I was warmly welcomed by District SAL Commander Kessler and the members of the Fifth District, on maybe the worst day of the winter. The following week I was at Mid-Winter with all of you, which is always a learning experience.

On Sunday January 31, I was in the Fourteenth District at the Garfield Post 566 where once again I was warmly welcomed.

In the past couple of months, I have sent out quite a few get-well cards to our members, and a few sympathy cards to families. Please email me with the all info including, address, to anyone you think would like a card. Also in that regard, please fill out Member Data Forms for all deceased members since June 1, 2015 and send to Detachment Headquarters. We will be holding our Annual Memorial Service on Sunday May 22, 2016 in Chillicothe at the Sons of The American Legion Detachment of Ohio Convention. Our service will begin promptly at 8:00 a.m. on Sunday morning.

In the next few months, I will be visiting the Seventh District on March 13 at Luther Griffin Post 14 in Bainbridge, then back home to the Thirteenth District on March 20 at Euclid Post 343. After that, I will be attending Spring NEC in Indianapolis April 29 thru May 1, and then last but not least Sunday May 15 I will be in the First District at Toledo Post 512. Then on to our Detachment Convention.

I hope to see you all there!

Dale Anderson, II, Chaplain
Detachment of Ohio
(440) 554-8388
daleanderson2@aol.com

Adjutant's Notes



SQUADRON & DISTRICT OFFICER ELECTIONS. Welcome to spring and election season for the Sons of The American Legion! It's time to be thinking about who will lead your squadrons, districts and the detachment for the year 2016-2017. Please remember that your new squadron and district officers are required to be elected and certified to Detachment Headquarters by May 1. Certification forms are available from the SAL membership

page on the detachment website, <http://www.ohiolegion.com/sal-membership.html>. Scroll to the bottom of the page for both the squadron and district forms. New district officers should also use the order form on the Legion's <http://www.ohiolegion.com/membership.html> page to request their Sons of The American Legion covers and name badges.

CONSOLIDATED SQUADRON REPORTS. Along with the 2017 Officer Certification Forms, your Squadron Adjutant should be receiving your 2016 Consolidated Squadron Report Form from HQ soon. This is the form you need to use to document all your activities, programs, donations, etc. for the 2015-2016 membership year.

Please take a few minutes to tally your hours and the monies involved in support of Sons of The American Legion programs. District Adjutants should also file a report for their district's activities independent of the squadrons in their boundaries. Contact Jason Graven at HQ if you haven't received a blank report.

There will also be a Microsoft Excel version of the report available from the detachment website to help you get everything right (once we see the changes for this year). Enter your data in the yellow fields on the "Details" sheet to have the report form filled in automatically. Just print three copies of the completed report, like the paper one from headquarters.

Whichever way you choose to create the report, you need to file two paper forms as your official, submitted copies.

Not everyone will have information for every item, so just report what you have done, whether it's a little or a lot. At a minimum, fill in the squadron summary details at the top and send it to HQ so we know you at least looked at it.

I would suggest that you use the period from the end of one state convention to the next as your dates of inclusion and file it by the convention. Note that if your squadron wishes to be considered for the Commander's Program Award, your report and all donations must be received at Detachment HQ one month prior - by April 15.

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2016 DETACHMENT CONVENTION – MAY 20-22.

The call and related files for the 53rd Detachment Convention have been published on the website – follow the link near the bottom of the main SAL page. We will be at the Quality Inn in Chillicothe, hosted by District 7. There are two overflow hotels, as well – first come, first served.

REGISTRATION DEADLINES AT DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS (not postmarks!)

- Housing: April 12th
- Delegates: May 13th

Anyone wishing to be selected as a delegate to the National Convention in Cincinnati should be in attendance at the Detachment Convention. District Commanders should prepare their delegate lists in the order they wish to nominate members.

2018 DETACHMENT CONVENTION BIDS. Any District and/or Squadron wishing to bid as the host for the 2018 Detachment Convention should have their bid package ready and submit it to Convention Screening Chairman Buster Sutterlin or me **before** the opening session on Friday in Chillicothe. Any entries submitted after that time will not be considered.

See you all in May!

For God and Country,

Scott J. Thornton, Adjutant
711 Whisperwood Parkway
Holland, Ohio 43528
Mobile – (419) 467-4659
Office – (419) 247-4571
scottj.thornton@gmail.com

Judge Advocate



You have made the weekly email update a success for over ten years! Detachment Officers and Chairmen, District Officers, Post and Unit members all coming together to keep members of the Ohio American Legion Family educated and informed. In

January, I had problems with my computer and needed to update my mailing list. Thank You for your patience. I must also thank everyone who submitted

articles and updates, and ask that you please continue to do so. If you know someone who is not receiving this update, please share it and have them contact me to be added to the weekly mailing list.

PDC Bill Towns, Judge Advocate
docbill@neo.rr.com

Americanism

5 Star Program of Service/ The 10 Ideals Program

These programs of the Sons of the American Legion go to the root of instilling true Americanism in those individuals who complete the programs. In the 5 Star Program, the five stars that are addressed demonstrate knowledge of; Patriotism – history of the flag, proper display, and proper respect to it; Citizenship – participation in community events and having a working knowledge of the qualities of a good citizen; Discipline – respect for rules and obedience to them; Leadership – principle requirement of leadership; Legionism – thoroughly understands the ritualistic work and the program of activities for the SAL.

Once the person has reviewed the criteria and researched the topics a brief exam is given. Upon successful completion, an application should be completed and submitted to the Detachment or Department for approval after which a medal demonstrating the achievement may be obtained through Emblem Sales.

The 10 Ideals Program covers Patriotism, Health, Knowledge, Training, Honor, Faith, Helpfulness, Courtesy, Reverence, and Comradeship. This is a written demonstration of understanding and participation in these ten points and, as with the 5 Star Program, with Detachment or Department approval, a medal may be obtained from Emblem Sales.

You don't have to go too far to find details of these programs and the exams, they are listed in the Squadron Handbook, but there is also good presentation of both programs on the Sons website, www.legion.org/sons.

Today, these programs have more importance than ever before because of the countless changes in our education system with regards to what can and what cannot be presented in the classrooms. Our over-indulgence in political correctness has seen the demise in the teaching of many of these values.

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We cannot hope that today's educators are teaching the same things we learned in school many years ago; today we must train our youth in the importance of these values. I encourage all reading this to participate in these pro-

grams because here's the bottom line – our educators don't relay many of these values, that leaves it up to you and I and if you don't know all aspects of the programs, how are you going to encourage these values? Let do more than talk about it, let's participate and educate!

Americanism Commission Community Service Scrapbook Contest

Start your year off right and begin collecting information for your Community Service Scrapbook. Squadrons, Districts, and even Detachments can enter the Americanism Commission's Community Service Scrapbook Contest. Please see pages 39-40 in the SAL Manual for complete criteria, rules, judging, points, and deadline information. The manual is available online at www.legion.org/sal.

Scrapbooks must be properly bound so there are no loose pages, they must be typed or neatly written, spelling and grammar must be correct, and the information presented must be in chronological order. All submissions must have dates and descriptions and only articles taking place this year may be submitted for judging. Points will be awarded according to this and other criteria listed in the manual. The scrapbook with the highest point total is eligible for an award.

The usual deadline is just prior to the Pre-Convention NEC Meeting, likely to be due on July 15, 2016. You mail your completed scrapbook to National Headquarters, Sons of The American Legion, P.O. Box 1055, Indianapolis, Indiana 46206 with a return receipt requested.

Scrapbooks are judged from the criteria in the SAL Manual by the Americanism Commission members present at the Pre-NEC Convention Meeting. Winners are recognized at the Convention.

The Americanism Commission would love to see many Squadrons, Districts, and Detachments enter.

Start by collecting those photos, news articles, and information on your events early so you can compile your scrapbook as the year progresses and you'll be ready by the July deadline.

Greg "Doc" Gibbs

National Americanism Commission Chairman

"Service to God and Country"

"Service to God and Country" is an American Legion and Sons of The American Legion program whose saying describes our members' attitude and way of life. Nondenominational and nonsectarian, the Legion's support for religion in the public square is basic Americanism. Rather than acting independently of religious groups, the Sons of The American Legion desires to cooperate with and join them in reminding the American people with one voice that God is the author and architect of our beloved "land of the free." Without God, there is no Americanism.

The American Legion's and the Sons of The American Legion's founders believed that God and country couldn't be treated as mutually exclusive if the United States is to survive and prosper. Thus, they created the office of chaplain, charging it with keeping this association high in the minds of members. As spiritual leaders, chaplains see that the Legion's and the Sons of The American Legion's "Service to God and Country" program is carried out. This includes encouraging regular public worship, daily family prayer and the religious education of children, all in an effort to bring Americans closer to the Creator. In addition, they promote individual citizenship, service to the community, and our obligation to uphold and defend the Constitution.

That we rededicate ourselves to the service to God portion of our Preamble, through religious tolerance of all faiths; we encourage regular attendance at religious services, and religious training of our children; and that we as American citizens, as a result of our faith in God, should model integrity, self-sacrifice, hard work, and a life of caring for one another and members of our communities. That includes caring for our families, helping the elderly, mentoring youth, working for the good of the community, and continuing to support our veterans and active military.

Gerald Hammerschmidt,

Americanism Commission Vice-Chairman

Buckeye Boys State

Buckeye Boys State is well underway for the 2016 year. The delegates have been selected and should have been notified. The next step is the orientation that each delegate is required to attend.



On June 12, the delegates will arrive at the campus of Bowling Green State University for 8 days of an educational and leadership program that exposes young men to the rights and privileges, the duties and responsibilities, and the love of God and Country necessary to be self-governing citizens. The young men will be running their own government from state government all the way down to county and city governments. The delegates take home with them whole lot of knowledge and a lot of new friends.

Tim Conway, Chairman
Buckeye Boys State
(419) 276-6422
truckertim622001@yahoo.com

Child Welfare Foundation



With 3 months to go in the CWF fiscal year, Ohio currently sits 3rd in the nation with total donations of \$11,455. This amounts to 37 cents per capita. Our goal for this year is \$1.50 per capita. We trail Florida and Pennsylvania in donations.

As you finish up your yearly giving, please remember the CWF.

Don't forget to bring your (hopefully) filled CWF piggy banks to Chillicothe. Make me regret not buying a bigger truck to haul it all home for counting and donating. There will be a raffle for everyone that brings one (or more) back. I will also have a few more shirts and plenty of other items for sale.

As we approach the Detachment Convention, don't forget that all donations to advertising in the Convention Yearbook go to CWF. This is a great way to advertise your candidate, your business, and your Post/Squadron. The donations are deductible for tax purposes. I've already identified a few businesses and organizations in the Chillicothe area to "cold

sell," but if you know of a good target please let me know.

See you all in Chillicothe!

Cary Kuhl, Chairman
(440) 839-2487
cary.kuhl@gmail.com

Children's Miracle Network



Children's
Miracle Network

Gentlemen,

In keeping with my previous reports, I will be reporting on fundraising from Akron Children's Hospital and University Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital in Cleveland.

At Akron, here are a couple of fundraising activities one of which took place. At Barberton High School, an event called Team Trevor Night. The Varsity and JV boys' basketball teams held a basketball tournament with a chili and cool/soup cook off, a 50/50 raffle, bake sale, and sold T-shirts with all the proceeds going to Akron Children's Hospital.

Another fundraising event is the "Have a Heart Do Your Part" Radio-thon at Akron Children's Hospital at One Perkins Square in Akron in the Atrium Lobby. KDD 98.1 broadcast live starting February 11 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., February 12 5:30 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., and February 13 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. They have done this since 2000, giving patients and their families an opportunity to tell their stories and help to urge listeners to call in and make a pledge to benefit Akron Children's Hospital. In a preview to the Radio-thon they encourage individuals, schools, companies, & churches to "Hold-Up" their friends and neighbors for their pocket change then all the money will be collected during the Change Bandit Bash held the night before the start of the Radio-thon.

Cleveland Rainbow Babies and Children's Foundation is having a "Ride the Rainbow" event on April 16 from 6:30 p.m. to midnight at the Cleveland Public Auditorium. They are encouraging all participants to dance, dunk, donate, cheer, or "Do What Moves You" as a fundraising activity. All proceeds benefit University Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

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The Circle of Friends is a program where any interested group that wants to organize a fundraising activity for the hospital they can help plan and support the event to make it a success. For more information, you can contact Sharon Klonowaski at the hospital. One of these circle projects was sponsored by American Legion Post 601. They held a spaghetti dinner and Chinese raffle that raised \$3,000.00 for Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital.

The Josh Dog project is a very good and effective way to show how we feel about these children and a good way to get the word out about who we are as an organization and what we stand for.

Bruce Forshey, Chairman
Children's Miracle Network
(704) 423-6445
bruceforshey@gmail.com

Convention Screening

April is the cutoff for membership to determine the delegate strength for the National Convention in Cincinnati. The district commanders will receive an email or snail mail letter informing them of their total number of delegates. I ask that you email me or mail a list of your delegates before the state convention. I would appreciate your help getting this information before the convention so I can have most of the information compiled. Thank you for helping with this.

Bids are also being taken for the 2018 Detachment Convention. Your bid must be turned in to me or Detachment Adjutant Scott Thornton before the start of the Friday night session at Chillicothe on May 20, 2016.

PDC Bill "Buster" Sutterlin, Chairman
brs257@frontier.com
(419) 651-2409

Legislative

Gentlemen,



This is an election year and I want to be brief, but having just returned from the 2016 American Legion Leg-

islative Conference in Washington, DC, I want to express to you how much time it takes for a bill to become law.

So much of what I am sharing with you may not become law for a year or so until the new budget takes effect. Our Defense budget is \$582.7 billion, which is a 0.4% increase but \$23.9 billion less than planned by the Pentagon. While the global threat to America is great, the American Legion believes that national security is upheld by having a well-funded Department of Defense. This includes keeping the promises to those who enlisted to serve, and fighting against those who would sacrifice the benefits of those who served for short-term budget gains.

With so much going on with the Veterans Administration (VA), the National Commander has asked Congress to hold the VA accountable for the promised health care and benefits to all our service members. HR4251 is the bill that you might want to lobby your Congressperson to sign on as a co-sponsor. Every Senate or House bill or resolution that I reference can be found and researched by using the link: www.congress.gov and doing a quick search.

Those of us who hung around after the Mid-winter meeting and saw the presentation on equine therapy and how it relates to those with PTSD and TBI will be happy to learn that the American Legion is dedicating resources to study if Complementary and Alternative Medicine have the effect we saw.

The drive to end Veteran homelessness is still on and we are winning that battle, but so long as there is one homeless Veteran, the fight continues. It is important that we fund programs that not only gets Veterans off the streets, but also keeps them off the streets in the future.

S1862 and HR1694 are bill pending in regards to Veteran owned businesses and student Veterans. Lobby your Congressperson to sign on as a co-sponsor in support of these bills.

HR333, the Disabled Veterans Tax/Widows Tax is something we all need to get behind. We have three Ohio Representative that are signed on as co-sponsors, Bill Johnson (OH-6), Michael Turner (OH-10) and Joyce Beatty (OH-3). Thank them if you have the chance to see them. The military are the only federal employees who are subject to a disability compensation offset from their military retirement pay.

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We need to support legislation that would completely repeal these unjust offsets NOW!

HJ9 and SJ21 are the two versions of protecting the flag from physical desecration.

Currently only two Representatives from Ohio are signed on as co-sponsors, Bob Latta (OH-5) and Pat Tiberi (OH-12), neither of Ohio's Senators have signed on to the Senate version. The votes on this has been very close over the years, but maybe it's time to pressure Congress to approve the bills and let the States vote on this becoming a Constitutional amendment. We cannot fly a Confederate flag but we also cannot stop someone from displaying an ISIS or foreign flag. There is just something wrong about that when you see a flag draped coffin of a deceased member of the military.

Finally, we all need to remember that when we meet with our politicians, you are speaking as an individual, not as a member of your American Legion Post. Politician's compromise, sometimes a 'no' vote does not mean they are against something, it can also mean that they do not believe it is good enough. Be polite. Remind them..."Don't show me your party; show me your loyalty to our Country."

Bernie Kessler, Chairman
kesslerbernie@gmail.com

Special Olympics



Special Olympics

We attended the Special Olympics Winter Games held at Brandywine Ski Resort and Kent State University

Skating Rink. We all had a great experience helping in the events and presenting awards. We served breakfast February 4 at the Clarion Inn in Hudson, and had a great turnout. Thanks to all the SAL, Department, and Auxiliary that participated.

Again, as I have reported, our programs are at great risk of being cut. In 2013-2014, we missed the budget goal by over \$10,000 and we missed our goal by over \$18,000 for 2014-2015. The Department has sent a letter to all Posts asking for a minimum donation of \$20.00 from each Post, Unit, or Squadron to meet the budget of \$3,200 for 2015-2016. If programs are cut, it will be a great loss for The American Legion, but a

worse lose for the Special Olympics athletes and coaches that look forward to our participation. On a good note, I want to thank District 3 for the biggest donation of \$4,480 for 2014-2015.

Upcoming Events: June 24 thru 26 - State Summer Games, August 2 - Golf Tournament, August 20 - Northern Sectional Softball, August 20 & 21 - State Aquatics, September 10 - State Team Softball & Individual Skills, September 13 & 14 - State Golf, October 1 - Bowling, October 22 & 23 - State Team Bowling, December 4 - State Aquatics. Go to the Special Olympics web page, www.soo.org, for additional information on upcoming events and how to register to volunteer.

I will be finishing of the 2016 year in Columbus at the Summer Games June 24 & 25 in "Tent Town" and December 3 & 4 at the State Aquatics at Ohio State University. Hope to see you there.

Again, our programs depend on the support of our donations to Department. Let's start planning our fundraising dinners and raffles to help meet our goals. Get involved! It is a very heart warming and a gratifying experience when you see the joy of the athletes and coaches thanking you for what The American Legion Family does for them.

Keith Bell, Chairman
(440) 669-2415
kbell29900@roadrunner.com

S.A.L SQUADRON 757



**REVERSE RAFFLE FOR
SPECIAL OLYMPICS**

SATURDAY MARCH 19TH

SPAGHETTI DINNER AT 6PM
DRAWING BEGINS AT 7PM
TICKETS ARE \$ 20.00 EACH
THERE ARE 10 - \$50.00 WINNERS
GRAND PRIZE \$ 1500.00

SEE A 757 S.A.L MEMBER FOR TICKETS OR CONTACT
DENNIS ALBRIGHT (740) 253-7454

THE EVENT WILL BE HELD AT
AMERICAN LEGION POST 757
289 COOKS HILL RD
CHILLICOTHE, OH

1 ST = \$50	12 TH = \$25 GC	25 TH = \$50	37 TH = \$25 GC
50 TH = \$50	62 ND = \$25 GC	75 TH = \$50	87 TH = \$25 GC
100 TH = \$50	112 TH = \$25 GC	125 TH = \$50	137 TH = \$25 GC
150 TH = \$50	162 ND = \$25 GC	175 TH = \$50	187 TH = \$25 GC
200 TH = \$50	212 TH = \$25 GC	225 TH = \$50	237 TH = \$25 GC

246TH TO 250TH WILL BE BROUGHT UP FRONT FOR THE OPTION TO SPLIT GRAND PRIZE
IF NO ONE WANTS TO SPLIT WE WILL CONTINUE TO DRAW UNTIL THERE IS A WINNER



Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation



NORTH REPORT.

Attica Sons of the American Legion #260 and the New London Sons of the American Legion have their picture in

The Veteran newsletter for their generous donations to the television fund!



The Fifth District SAL Pizza / Bingo party was March 26 at the Sandusky OVH. Soldiers and their families from across the nation are sent to the Louis B. Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center for treatment of the physical and psychological wounds of war. But many of our wounded warriors cannot bring their wives, husbands, children or parents with them while they receive treatment because they cannot afford the cost of lodging while they get the care they so desperately need.

The Greater Cleveland Fisher House has committed to raising funds to build veterans and their families a home where they can stay while their loved ones get the help they need. The Greater Cleveland Fisher House will provide free lodging for families of veterans hospitalized and being treated at the Louis B. Stokes Cleveland VA Medical Center, Cleveland Clinic, University Hospitals, MetroHealth System and other area hospitals.

Knuckleheads United presents its 6th Annual Polar Bear Run on April 10, 2016 to benefit The Greater Cleveland Fisher House. While this run is primarily for motorcycle riders, all vehicles are welcome. Reg-

istration begins at 10:30 a.m. at Lake Erie Harley Davidson, 38401 Chester Rd, Avon, Ohio 44011 (440-934-5000). Last Bike out at Noon/Last Bike in at 5:00pm. Admission is \$20 per person. There will be prizes for the top poker hand, 50/50 raffles, Chinese raffles and a chance to purchase an extra card for \$1.00 at the end. Stops include: Quaker Steak and Lube (Vermillion), Wiley's Lounge, Jen's Old Timbers, LaPorte Inn and we end at Mulligan's Pub and Grill where you will enjoy all your favorite 80's songs performed by Billy Morris' Sunset Strip and dinner catered by Mulligan's Pub and Grill. (Entertainment and Dinner are included with your Admission Fee) For questions or more info, please contact knucklehead-sunited@gmail.com.

Robert Showalter, VA&R North Chairman
roshow2850@yahoo.com
(419) 307-1259

SOUTH REPORT.

I have been busy getting ready for the Detachment Convention. A Medal of Honor recipient spoke in Akron about issues facing veterans now days. He spoke at Post 808 on February 19, 2016 and talked about transitioning back to home life, college, etc. He received his Medal of Honor for his actions on November 9, 2007 when his unit got ambushed. White was knocked out briefly by a rocket grenade. He now resides in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Gerald Palmer, VA&R South Chairman
gerpalm60@gmail.com

From the Commission Chair.

VA&R, why we do what we do.

You have heard me use the quote from our Preamble to the Constitution, "Proud possessors of a priceless heritage." What is our heritage? Our heritage, for many, is our father or grandfather who was a US war-time veteran. They gave us the ability to be members of the SAL. Many of us, myself included, don't have those men with us anymore. We are called by our organization to remember those gone before and to aid those still here. My dad was a veteran of the Korean War, but was of age to be drafted in WWII. It is that generation of Veterans that we are losing at a rate of nearly a thousand a day across the country. These men left home in their youth to defend our way of life against the axis powers.

SEE VA&R PAGE 11

VA&R CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

I wrote in a previous article of time spent with a Navy Veteran named Bob G. at the Dayton VAMC. He enjoyed telling his story. I would urge all of you to take some time and spend it with a WWII or Korean veteran. Let them know that they are still cared for and not forgotten. Please don't take this as ignoring other groups, but as I mentioned above the older guys won't be with us that much longer.

Now on to what we need to do for the future, American Legion National Commander Barnett recently said this, "Veterans and service members who have sacrificed so much to protect our country absolutely deserve quality health care, timely delivery of their benefits and a 21st century electronic medical records system. Sadly, that is not the case in 2016 in America."

The quagmires that some veterans encounter at their Department of Veterans Affairs facilities are well documented. Congress has passed legislation in an effort to solidify the ability of VA to terminate managers and employees who don't have Veterans' best interests in mind. Yet, that solution has fallen short of creating real change.

At the same time, our Veterans deserve significant advancements in the care they receive at VA. Veterans in rural areas should have better options for accessing health care. Women Veterans need improved services. Innovations in treatment should be developed for those suffering the signature wounds of modern warfare – PTSD and TBI injuries.

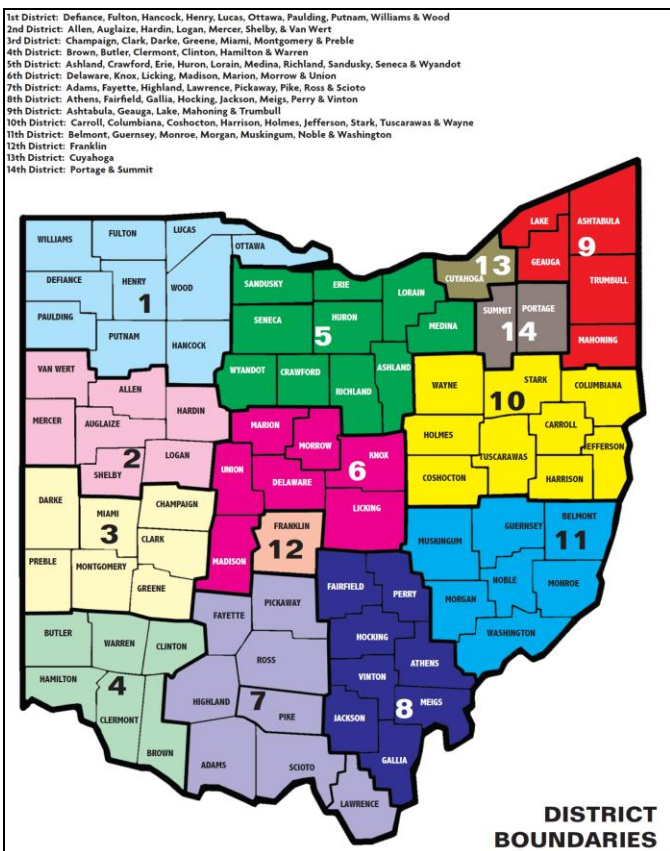


It all comes down to accountability. VA, Congress, DoD, and the American public all need to be accountable to those who have served, or who are still serving.

Remember this when we go to the polls for our upcoming primary and national elections. Be sure congress knows we stand with The American Legion in support of all programs benefitting our Veterans. Be sure to get out and vote!

PNVC, PDC Dan Sagraves, VA&R Commission Chair
dansagraves@twc.com

STATE ROUND-UP



Internal Affairs

Squadron and District Officer's Certification Forms for the 2016-2017 Membership year are now posted on the website at the bottom of the SAL Membership page.

Please note that changes have been made to the Commander's Award requirements document on the website. This form can be found on the main Sons of The American Legion page underneath Commander Brown's photo as well as at the bottom of the SAL membership page. If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Jason Graven, Director of Internal Affairs
The American Legion Dept. of Ohio
Graven@ohiolegion.com
740-362-7478 ext. 4

Fifth District



l. to r. Brad Swires, SAL Advisor Gary Boden, Janice Stamen, Sam Stamen, Rusty Dial, and PDC Bill "Buster" Sutterlin.

Sam Stamen, Past Commander of Loudon American Legion Post #257, resides at Colonial Manor Nursing Home. Loudonville Squadron 257 members made 12 pizzas for lunch for all the residents and workers at Colonial Manor on Saturday, December 19, 2015. While visiting with the residents they stopped in to see Sam. Sam is special. He was presented a 70-year member award at the March birthday dinner in 2015.

In March of 2011, Sam was awarded the Knight of the Legion of Honor medal from the Consulate General of France. Sam served in World War II in the Third Infantry Division that crossed southern France from the invasion at St. Tropez to the intense fight in the Colmar Pocket in the Ardennes. He was involved in seven out of the 10 major campaigns the 3rd Infantry fought in. Among the medals he received were two Bronze Stars, a Presidential Citation, Combat Infantry Badge, and the French Crois de Guerre. Sam concluded his service in Europe as First Sergeant. His comment about the war, "The heroes were the ones who didn't get back. We are just survivors."

In October 2011, Sam was privileged to take Honor Flight to Washington, D.C. "The most impressive thing I witnessed was the changing of the guard ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier," Sam said about his trip. He was so appreciative of the opportunity to go.



Veterans at the Loudonville Rest Home waiting for their Christmas gifts. l. to r. are Veteran Larry P., Veteran Roger LaBelle, Rusty Dial, Mike Oswald, PDC Bill "Buster" Sutterlin, Doug Smith, and behind Doug Smith is Brad Swires.



Veterans receiving Christmas gifts.



At the Washington Street Care Center are l. to r. Veterans Jimmy L, Robin M., and John M. receiving gifts, with Brad Swires presenting the gifts. Brad Swires is a veteran of the U. S. Air Force.

On Saturday, Dec. 19, 2015, SAL Squadron 257 presented Christmas gifts to 6 Veterans at the Loudonville Rest Home, 10 Veterans at the Foster Care Home, and 5 Veterans at the Washington Street Care Center in Loudonville. Each Veteran was presented a gift of their choice, a candy cane and a Christmas card.

Seventh District

The Magnificent Seventh District would like to welcome everyone to the 53rd Sons of The American Legion Detachment Convention. The convention will be held on May 20, 21, and 22 in Chillicothe at the Christopher Conference Center. We have a couple of activities planned to entertain you while you are here.

We will have a bus trip to visit three of the American Legion Posts in the area. The bus will seat 66 people at a cost of \$10.00 per person. The first stop will be Post 142 in Waverly, then Post 757 Chillicothe, and will wind up at host Post 62 in Chillicothe. At Post 62, we will offer a meal menu to be determined and will have a Karaoke/DJ.

Another trip is planned to visit the VA Hospital in Chillicothe. We have planned for 40 people on this trip but can adjust accordingly. There will be no charge for this trip. It will involve a presentation at the recreation center on the VA campus by the Public Affairs Officer. We will then visit patients in the Community Living Centers, visit the Mace House Museum and will dedicate a POW/MIA chair at the baseball stadium. Then we will travel to see the Veterans Memorials located in the city near the city park. Last, we will meet up with the other bus trip at Post 62.

There is a golf outing planned for Friday, May 20 for those who are arriving on Thursday night or wish to show up early on Friday. We will meet at the hotel at 9:00 a.m. and go to the VA Golf Course. This will be an 18-hole scramble at a cost of \$15.00.

If you are interested, in one of these trips or the golf outing please contact Mike Holz at mike.holz@twc.com or phone (740) 887-2005 or Gerry Palmer at gerpalm60@hotmail.com or phone (740) 804-8353 to sign up.

For the Junior Members, we have lined up free passes to Crown Sports Complex. For information on this or to sign up please contact Dennis Albright at Qubert71@yahoo.com or phone (740) 253-7454.

PDC Mike Holz, District Advisor

Eighth District

The Sons from Squadron 21 in Athens have been working in conjunction with the Athens County Historical Society on the restoration of three clocks in

Athens County. The first one we helped with was the one on Court Street in downtown Athens. This clock is over 80-years of age, has four stained glass panels and has a chime that sounds off every half hour.

The second was the clock in Glouster. It was located at the old depot station. The latest one we worked on was in Nelsonville, on the public square. We just finished it at the end of January. The clocks have a few upgrades, including lighting and the clock works are all atomic so they require very little maintenance.

We at the Sons have gotten a lot of recognition from this project. We are looking forward to doing other projects to restore some of the history of Athens County, for the younger generations to enjoy.

*Matt Hoisington, District 8 Commander
Squadron 21 Commander*



Ninth District

From PDC Jeff Vrabel, Sr.

On October 22, 2014, I was asked to help a friend get his medals from World War II. I did not know why he didn't receive them, but I knew what to do and who to contact. I immediately contacted our Congressman and got the process started.

It took fourteen months, but we finally heard that the medals had arrived in the local Congressional office. Our Veteran has one of the people who had records burned in the fire at the St. Louis Records Storage Facility.

On December 11, 2015, my son, PDASaA Jeffrey Vrabel, Jr. had the privilege of presenting a US Navy Veteran Frank Bochenek. I found out from Frank's son, Ken, that they were out to dinner at the Eat-N-Park in Boardman, so we decided that that was the place to make the presentation.

We went to purchase a shadow box and mounted the medals, then it was off to the restaurant.

When we got to Eat-N-Park, I informed the manager on duty what was up, and asked that all the staff that could be spared be allowed to watch, because this could be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. The manager agreed, and thanked us for letting them know.

Jeffrey and I found Frank, his wife Pauline, and Ken sitting in the back corner of the restaurant. Their food had just been delivered, and Frank was getting ready to start eating when he saw us. We pulled two chairs and sat down with them, and I handed him a box, wrapped up like a Christmas present. Frank had a surprised look on his face and asked me what it was. I told him if he wanted to know, he had to open it.

When he did, I saw the biggest smile I have seen in quite some time. The look on his face was priceless, and you could tell how much it meant to him. I immediately stood up and announced to everyone that this was a World War II US Navy Medal and that he had just received his medals. The entire place started clapping and cheering, and there was not a dry eye in the house.

The manager came over and congratulated and thanked Frank for his service, then told him that his dinner and his family's dinner was on the house. She

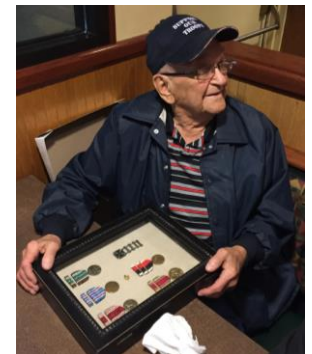
then asked if she could be in a picture with Frank. Soon after, other Veterans who just happened to be eating at the restaurant that day came over and shook Frank's hand, hugged Frank, and talked as if they were long lost friends. Others Eat-N-Park also came over to the table to wish Frank the best and thank him.

A few weeks later, United States Representative Tim Ryan stopped by Frank's house and posed for pictures with Frank, his medals, and his family.

One of the most memorable things about the whole presentation is what Frank said. First, he thanked me for helping him, and then he said, "This was a long time coming. It took over 70 years to get these. These are for me and for my buddies. There's not too many of us left. Man, does this mean a lot to me!" Then he hugged the box as if it was a little baby.

I am so honored to have been able to play a small part in getting Frank his medals. I have not had that privilege before, and may never have it again, but it an experience that I will NEVER forget.

THANKS FRANK FOR YOUR SERVICE TO OUR GREAT NATION, AND CONGRATULATIONS ON RECEIVING YOUR WELL-DESERVED MEDALS!!!



Ken Bochenek assists his father, US Navy World War II Veteran Frank Bochenek, open the package containing the medals he never received for his service.

SEE NINTH PAGE 15



United States Representative Tim Ryan, (13th) and Frank Bochenek. Ryan's office was instrumental in obtaining the medals Frank had never received for his service in the United States Navy as a Combat Engineer during World War II.



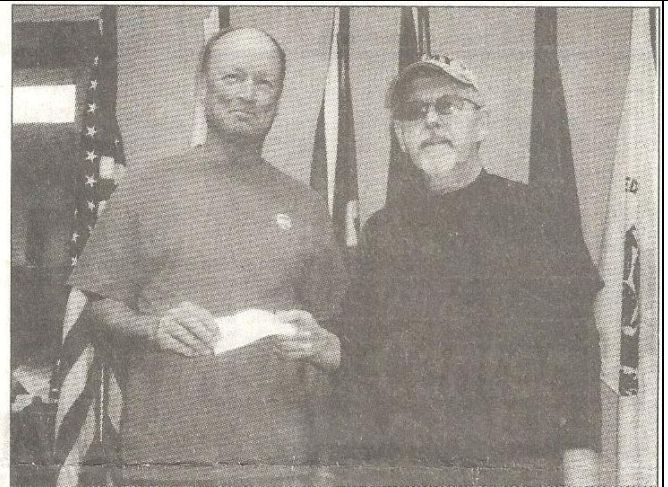
Tom Bochenek, Rep. Tim Ryan, Pauline Bochenek, Frank Bochenek, and Ken Bochenek.



Frank Bochenek and PDC Jeff Vrabel, Sr.



Tenth District



Scio Sons of American Legion donates to Harrison County Military Support Group

Pictured is Ray Ferrell (right) accepting a check for \$250 from Tim Galbraith from Scio Post 482. The money donated will go toward food and "goody" boxes for the local military personnel stationed in the states and overseas as well. More donations are always welcomed. For more info contact Ray Ferrell or Terry Stewart.



Past Commanders Club Raffle

Thanks to all who participated the Past Detachment Commanders Club Reverse Raffle during the 2016 Mid-Winter Conference. We appreciate your continued support!

The Final 5 individuals decided to split the Grand Prize.

This year's winners were:

Rotation Drawn	Ticket #	Name	Prize
1	158	Kent Ewers	\$10.00
20	225	Jim Dombrose	\$10.00
40	71	Glenn Hickman	\$10.00
60	23	Glenn Hickman	\$10.00
80	279	David Dilts	\$10.00
100	266	Steve Masowick	\$10.00
120	141	Jim Leedom	\$10.00
140	5	Karen Wright	\$10.00
160	290	John Ray	\$10.00
180	190	Gary Lang	\$10.00
200	2	Bill Towns	\$10.00
220	18	Evan Mahlman	\$10.00
240	154	Deb Sutterlin	\$10.00
260	225	Squadron 8	\$10.00
280	51	Kevin Carpenter	\$10.00
FINAL 5	77	SVH	\$200.00
	161	NVC Dennis Henkemeyer	\$200.00
	168	Craig Smith	\$200.00
	169	Dennis Albright	\$200.00
	182	SAL District 3	\$200.00

I would also like to thank all of the PDCC's that attended and helped with the raffle.


PDC Rob Brewer

BLAST FROM THE PAST!!!

With the National Convention coming to Cincinnati in August, I was reminded of the last time it was there in 1986. The Detachment of Ohio was not as large then as it is now. I came across a picture of the Ohio delegation and wanted to share it with everyone. Some of the guys are still active and some are not. Eight of the group pictured are past Detachment Commanders. Take a few minutes and have some fun trying to identify any of those in the photo. I'll give you one hint. Two of them are brothers from Squadron #69 in Marietta. Enjoy the picture and I'll see you in Cincinnati.



PNVC Dan Sagraves



THANK YOU FOR A GREAT YEAR!!!

Deadline for next *The Ohio SALute* is:

May 31, 2016

Please include pictures and articles about Memorial Day ceremonies in your area.

*The full schedule of deadlines will be published in the next edition of *The Ohio SALute*.*

From the Editor



What a surprise this edition, as we have had more information submitted than I can ever remember. This is the type of participation I spoke of at the Mid-Winter Conference in January.

As I stated, there has been discussion of discontinuing this publication. I would hate to see that happen, as *The Ohio SALute* is a nationally recognized and respected newsletter. That acclaim is possible due to you, the members who submit information to be shared.

SEE VRABEL PAGE 17

VRABEL CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

We cannot stop submitting things! Keep *The Ohio SALute* around for many more years!

As always, members, Squadrons, and Districts are encouraged to submit coming events, then to submit a recap of those events. As you can see, we love to publish pictures, so people all over the world can see what the Detachment of Ohio is doing.

As a reminder, when submitting information via email, please send in Word format. If I need something in a different format, I will contact you.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at your convenience.

Keep up the AWESOME work!

PDC Jeff Vrabel, Sr., Editor
The Ohio SALute
jeffvrabel@sbcglobal.net

Student Veterans of America

Student Veterans of America is a student veterans group that coordinates a coalition of military support "chapters" at college campuses in our country and around the world. The chapters exist to provide support for student veterans who are still growing accustomed to an academic life that can sometimes differ drastically from the regimented and organized lifestyle they lived in the military. To help student veterans cope, SVA chapters provide a peer network for veterans on campus, fostering a sense of camaraderie among them and an esprit de corps that they knew and loved during their service.

SVA chapters often host activities on campus, both social and professional in nature. As an officially recognized student group by their schools, chapters serve as a touchstone for student veterans – who might be finding it difficult to relate to their college-aged peers.

As a long-time stalwart and advocate for veterans' education, The American Legion is an official partner of Student Veterans of America. The Legion recognizes the need to provide support to veterans on campus and the positive impact that a population of educated veterans can have on our society. Accordingly, the Legion provides mentorship, support and a collaborative voice to Student Veterans of America.

To find a Student Veterans of America chapter on your campus, search SVA's official chapter locator. For more information about SVA, visit the organization's website.

American Legion Posts everywhere are encouraged to reach out to and engage SVA chapters by locating one near them. Legionnaires can provide valuable services to SVA members in the form of assistance with benefits processing and mentorship.

The American Legion and the GI Bill: Together from the beginning

The American Legion etched a permanent place in history in 1944. That year, Legionnaires ushered into law the Servicemen's Readjustment Act – better known as the GI Bill. Since then, millions of veterans have received free or discounted higher education benefits. So effective was the GI Bill, it is often credited for spurring more than 50 years of economic prosperity across the nation.



President Franklin D. Roosevelt signing the G.I. Bill into law on June 22, 1944.

As the decades unfolded, however, the benefit fell out of pace with the changing times. The GI Bill was no longer covering fast-rising tuition costs. In some communities, it barely covered transportation cost to and from campus. National Guard and Reserve veterans were not receiving the same GI Bill benefits as those who'd served in the active-duty branches, regardless of their combat experiences in places like Iraq and Afghanistan. Nearly 25 years removed from its last major overhaul, it was no longer your grandfather's GI Bill.

SEE GI BILL PAGE 18

Everything changed summer of 2008.

The American Legion and Congress had worked together for more than three years to overhaul the federal veterans' education benefits package, including elimination of a \$1,200 "buy-in" for service personnel and extending the time span a veteran has to use the benefit after discharge.

The Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Act was signed into law on June 30, 2008, and implemented Aug. 1, 2009. Four different education programs now exist: the Post-9/11 GI Bill, the Montgomery GI Bill, the Montgomery GI Bill/Selected Reserve and the Reserve Educational Assistance Program (REAP).

Scholarship Opportunities for Ohio Soldiers



Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program:

Will pay 100% of the tuition charges of state-assisted colleges and universities. For approved private or proprietary degree-granting institutions of higher education, the program will pay 100% of the average tuition charges of all state universities. The program is not available

for courses not applicable to or leading to an Associate or Baccalaureate degree.

Eligibility: The only individuals eligible for this program are Ohio residents who have a high school diploma or GED certificate and who enlist, re-enlist, or extend their current enlistment for six years of Selective Reserve duty in the Ohio National Guard.

Ohio National Guard Tuition Grant: The Ohio National Guard grant will cover 60% of the total tuition and general fee charges of state assisted colleges and universities in pursuit of an undergraduate degree. The Grant is limited to 12 quarters or 8 semesters and participants must remain enrolled as full time undergraduate student maintaining 12 credit hours, or more, per term.

Eligibility: The only individuals eligible for this program are OH residents who have a high school di-

ploma or GED certificate and who enlist, re-enlist, or extend their current enlistment for six years of Selective Reserve duty in the Ohio National Guard.

Ohio Department of Education

25 South Front Street, Mail Stop 615
Columbus, OH 43215-4183
Phone: 614-466-9287
Fax: 614-728-8470



Candidates for Office

Gentlemen,



I am running for the office of National Executive Committeeman. I have served as Alternate NEC for the past two years. Prior to this time, I served as Detachment Commander in 2004-2005. I have held many offices at all levels. I continue to support and am active serving the Sons of the American Legion on all levels. **I promise to do the best job I can to serve as your representative.** I would appreciate your support in voting for me, Bill "Buster" Sutterlin, for NEC at the Detachment Convention on May 22, 2016.

Thank you for this consideration!

PDC Bill "Buster" Sutterlin

Dale Anderson II for Second Vice-Commander

Dale is eligible for the Sons of The American Legion through his mother, Margaret Peer, (deceased), a US Army WAC who served during WW II. Dale is a 27-year Member of Squadron 703 in Parma, where he has been SAL Commander for past 25-years.

During his command, membership has grown from 50 to 350+, a 7-fold increase. Dale has also held a variety of offices at the District level and has been District 13 SAL Commander for the past 7 years. Dale has been married to his wife, Camille, for 37-years and has three children; Jolene, Dale III (Iraq War Vet), and Laura, and five Grandchildren, all members of The American Legion Family. Dale is currently the Detachment of Ohio Chaplain.

Thank you for your support.

Gentlemen,



I am a candidate for the High Office of 2016 - 2017 Detachment of Ohio Chaplain. I am a 26-year member of the Sons of the American Legion, having my eligibility for membership earned by my late father, Robert, a 64-year member of The

American Legion. I have held most offices on the Squadron and District levels, and currently hold the office of Fifth District Commander for the fourth consecutive year. On the Detachment level, I hold the position of Legislative Commission Chairman.

While I hope that our organization continues to be one of the greatest American Legion programs, there is no certainty without commitment, a commitment we need to renew year after year. Our commitment to our Veterans is a statement to our youth and to those non-members that we have a common goal of support for our military and youth of our country. I ask for your support in keeping the commitment.

Bernie Kessler



The American Legion Family

TESSIE'S TIDBITS

Deadline for news is 4 p.m. Thursday

The stories behind six heroes who served at Iwo Jima

This is a true story.

Each year, I am hired to go to Washington, D.C., with the eighth-grade class from my hometown of Clinton, Wisconsin, to videotape their trip. I greatly enjoy visiting our nation's capital, and each year, I take some special memories back with me. This fall's trip was especially memorable.

On the last night of our trip, we stopped at the Iwo Jima Memorial. This memorial is the largest bronze statue in the world and depicts one of the most famous photographs in history — that of six brave soldiers raising the American flag at the top of a rocky hill on the island of Iwo Jima, Japan, during World War II.

More than 100 students and chaperones piled off the buses and headed toward the memorial. I noticed a solitary figure at the base of the statue. As I got closer he asked, "Where are you guys from?"

I told him that we were from Wisconsin. "Hey, I'm a cheese head, too! Come gather around, Cheese heads, and I will tell you a story."

It was James Bradley. He just happened to be in Washington, D.C., to speak at the memorial the following day. He was there that night to say good night to his dad, who had passed away. He was just about to leave when he saw the buses pull up. I videotaped him as he spoke to us, and received his permission to share what he said from my videotape. It is one thing to tour the incredible monuments filled with history in Washington, D.C., but it is quite another to get the kind of insight we received that night.

When all had gathered around, he reverently began to speak. Here are his words from that night:

"My name is James Bradley and I'm from Antigo, Wisconsin. My dad is on that statue, and I wrote a book called 'Flags of Our Fathers.' It is the story of the six boys you see behind me.

"Six boys raised the flag. The first guy putting the pole in the

ground is Harlon Block, Harlon was an all-state football player. He enlisted in the Marine Corps with all the senior members of his football team. ... They were off to play another type of game. A game called war. But it didn't turn out to be a game. Harlon, at the age of 21, died with his intestines in his hands. I don't say that to gross you out, I say that because there are people who stand in front of this statue and talk about the glory of war. You guys need to know that most of the boys in Iwo Jima were 17, 18 and 19 years old — and it was so hard that the ones who did make it home never even would talk to their families about it."

(He pointed to the statue) "You see this next guy? That's Rene Gagnon from New Hampshire. If you took Rene's helmet off at the moment this photo was taken and looked in the webbing of that helmet, you would find a photograph ... a photograph of his girlfriend. Rene put that in there for protection because he was scared. He was 18 years old. It was just boys who won the battle of Iwo Jima. Boys. Not old men."

"The next guy here, the third guy in this tableau, was Sgt. Mike Strank. Mike is my hero. He was the hero of all these guys. They called him the 'old man' because he was so old. He was already 24. When Mike would motivate his boys in training camp, he didn't say, 'Let's go kill some Japanese' or 'Let's die for our country.' He knew he was talking to little boys. ... Instead he would say, 'You do what I say and I'll get you home to your mothers.'"

"The last guy on this side of the statue is Ira Hayes, a Pima Indian from Arizona. Ira Hayes was one of them who lived to walk off Iwo Jima. He went into the White House with my dad. President (Harry S) Truman told him, 'You're a hero.' He told reporters, 'How can I feel like a hero when 250 of my buddies hit the island with me and only 27 of us walked off alive?'"

"So you take your class at

school, 250 of you spending a year together having fun, doing everything together. Then all 250 of you hit the beach, but only 27 of your classmates walk off alive. That was Ira Hayes. He had images of horror in his mind. Ira Hayes carried the pain home with him and eventually died dead drunk, face down, drowned in a very shallow puddle, at the age of 32 (10 years after this picture was taken).

"The next guy, going around the statue, is Franklin Souseley from Hilltop, Kentucky. A fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. His best friend, who is now 70, told me, 'Yeah, you know, we took two cows up on the porch of the Hilltop General Store. Then we strung wire across the stairs so the cows couldn't get down. Then we fed them Epsom salts. Those cows pooped all night.' Yes, he was a fun-lovin' hillbilly boy. Franklin died on Iwo Jima at the age of 19. When the telegram came to tell his mother that he was dead, it went to the Hilltop General Store. A barefoot boy ran that telegram up to his mother's farm. The neighbors could hear her scream all night and into the morning. Those neighbors lived a quarter of a mile away."

"The next guy, as we continue to go around the statue, is my dad, John Bradley, from Antigo, Wisconsin, where I was raised. My dad lived until 1994, but he would never give interviews."

"When Walter Cronkite's producers or the New York Times would call, we were trained as little kids to say 'No, I'm sorry, sir, my dad's not here. He is in Canada fishing. No, there is no phone there, sir. No, we don't know when he is coming back.' My dad never fished or even went to Canada. Usually, he was sitting there right at the table eating his Campbell's soup. But we had to tell the press that he was out fishing. He didn't want to talk to the press."

"You see, like Ira Hayes, my dad didn't see himself as a hero. Everyone thinks these guys are heroes, 'cause they are in

a photo and on a monument. My dad knew better. He was a medic. John Bradley from Wisconsin was a combat caregiver. On Iwo Jima, he probably held over 200 boys as they died. And when boys died on Iwo Jima, they writhed and screamed, without any medication or help with the pain.

"When I was a little boy, my third-grade teacher told me that my dad was a hero. When I went home and told my dad that, he looked at me and said, 'I want you always to remember that the heroes of Iwo Jima are the guys who did not come back. Did NOT come back.'"

"So that's the story about six nice young boys. Three died on Iwo Jima, and three came back as national heroes. Overall, 7,000 boys died on Iwo Jima in the worst battle in the history of the Marine Corps. My voice is giving out, so I will end here. Thank you for your time."

Suddenly, the monument wasn't just a big old piece of metal with a flag sticking out of the top. It came to life before our eyes with the heartfelt words of a son who did indeed have a father who was a hero. Maybe not a hero for the reasons most people would believe, but a hero nonetheless.

One thing I learned while on tour with my eighth-grade students in D.C. that is not mentioned here is that, if you look at the statue very closely and count the number of "hands" raising the flag, there are 13. When the man who made the statue was asked why there were 13, he simply said the 13th hand was the hand of God.

Great story. Worth your time. Worth every American's time. Please pass it on. ■

SPECIAL REPORT

American Legion National Adjutant Daniel Wheeler

Your national headquarters has received a number of questions concerning the wearing of The American Legion cap, which is our official uniform, as well as questions concerning the use of posts for campaign events, and the legality of accepting donations from candidates or any other political entity. I think you will find the answers below, and would appreciate the widest dissemination. For your information, these are the preferred procedures; however, there is no penalty for a violation. If there is a violation, no one speaks for the national organization except our national commander or his designated spokesperson. Thanks.

The wearing of the cap and usage of The American Legion emblem, facilities and political donations

According to Article II, Section 2, of the Constitution of The American Legion, "The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment." The National Charter, approved by Congress, also stipulates The American Legion as an organization is nonpolitical* which has been interpreted by the National Judge Advocate as "non-partisan" in modern lingo. Therefore, The American Legion as an organization is prohibited from contributing, helping or endorsing a candidate.

However, a member, as a private citizen, and not representing the organization, can employ whatever legal and ethical means to advance his or her candidate.

The Legion cap is considered the official Legion uniform (see p. 42). It is not an individual Legion member's decision on the appropriate usage of the cap and emblem. If attending a political event, The American Legion cap, or any clothing with the emblem visible, should be removed so as not to imply endorsement by The American Legion. The problem is the assumption of endorsement by those who see the emblem or name worn at in improper location, such as a partisan rally.

When using post facilities to host candidates, post should remove emblem and Legion flag to avoid any impression of endorsements. Candidates for all parties must be presented equal opportunity at the same time to use the facilities on the same terms and conditions as other competing candidates.

If financial contributions are offered by candidates for political office, campaigns, political action committees or political parties, The American Legion should politely decline. Accepting these contributions may be perfectly legal, but The American Legion must avoid any perception of supporting any candidate or political party.

The American Legion values its independence and effectiveness on veterans' issues. This stance is best maintained by neutrality on individual candidates or political parties. The American Legion by legal definition is non-partisan and supports only issues, which impact your Four Pillars.

SEE WHEELER PAGE 22

* *This means “non-partisan” in today’s society. The American Legion is allowed by Congress to lobby for veterans’ benefits and a strong United States of America. (NJA, October 25, 2012)*

MEMORANDUM

Date: October 25, 2012

To: Daniel S. Wheeler

From: P. B. Onderdonk, Jr.

Re: Partisan Politics

You requested a review of the limitations on The American Legion becoming involved in partisan political activities. It may not.

This is made crystal clear by 36 US Code §21706 (part of The American Legion Corporate Charter), which states:

“The corporation shall be nonpolitical and may not promote the candidacy of an individual seeking public office.”

This is further emphasized by the provisions of Article II, Section 2 of the National Constitution, which provides:

“The American Legion shall be absolutely nonpolitical and shall not be used for the dissemination of partisan principles nor for the promotion of the candidacy of any person seeking public office or preferment.”

The American Legion takes positions on issues and lobbies for veteran’s benefits and a strong America. This is clearly permitted. What is not permitted is the endorsement of any candidate or the donation of funds by The American Legion to a candidate. The American Legion takes positions on issues and its members being citizens need to be informed on the issues. Hence, American Legion programs such as candidate nights are fully authorized as long as all candi-

dates are invited on the same terms and conditions. It would be illegal to invite the one you support with advance notice, but the one you oppose with no notice at all. When Legionnaires wear their pins and hats to political rallies, the media often try to reach the wrong conclusions. This can be very embarrassing to the Legionnaire. Hence, we normally recommend that Legionnaires do not wear their caps to partisan political rallies. There is no rule against doing this so long as the Legionnaire makes it clear there is no endorsement.

Likewise, we recommend that Legion publications not accept paid political ads. However, if they do, the paid political advertisements must be made on the same terms and conditions for all candidates and should be labeled “Paid Political Advertisement” at both the top and bottom.

As noted above, those who violate the partisan political activities prohibition put the Legion charter of their post at risk as well as its tax-exempt status.





MEMORIAL DAY

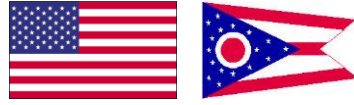
"Memorial Day is an opportunity to pause and **reflect** on the **sacrifices** of the more than one million Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen, and Coast Guardsmen who have made the ultimate sacrifice to **secure** our **freedoms**."

-General Norton Schwartz

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The Sons of The American Legion was created in 1952 as an organization within The American Legion that exists to honor the service and sacrifice of Legionnaires. The S.A.L. is made up of males of all ages whose parents or grandparents served in the U.S. military and became eligible for membership in The American Legion. Together, members of The American Legion, the American Legion Auxiliary and the Sons of The American Legion comprise The Legion Family. All these organizations place high importance on preserving our American traditions and values, improving the quality of life for our nation's children, caring for veterans and their families, and perhaps most importantly, teaching the fundamentals of good citizenship.

Sons have always worked Legionnaires with Legion Family programs. Our Family boasts a combined total membership of nearly 4.2 million members. This year, the Sons attained an all-time high national membership of over 350,000. The largest Detachment, Pennsylvania, has over 58,000 members. Trophies and awards are given to Detachments and Squads for the largest membership and the largest increase in membership. Just as each Legion post determines the extent of its service to the community, state and nation, each S.A.L. squadron is permitted flexibility in planning programs and activities to meet its own needs.

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